

Message for U.S. Citizens

## **H7N9 AVIAN INFLUENZA INFORMATION**

Please find below a travel notice from the Centers for Disease Control on Avian Flu (H7N9) in China. This notice is available at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/watch/avian-flu-h7n9-china.htm>. U.S. Citizens are encouraged to regularly go to this webpage to review the most up to date information from the Centers for Disease Control on Avian Flu (H7N9).

BEGIN TRAVEL NOTICE

### **Watch: Level 1, Practice Usual Precautions Avian Flu (H7N9)**

This information is current as of today, January 30, 2014

**Updated:** January 22, 2014

#### **What is the current situation?**

According to the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), there have been 192 confirmed human cases of avian influenza A (H7N9) with 57 deaths reported from China since April 2013. Most of these cases were reported during the spring of 2013, with very few over the summer months. More new cases have been recently reported, likely coinciding with the return of colder weather in China. Cases have been reported in the following provinces and municipalities: Anhui, Beijing, Fujian, Guangdong, Hebei, Henan, Hunan, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Shandong, Shanghai, and Zhejiang. A case in Taiwan and two cases in Hong Kong also have been reported in people who have traveled to an area of China where other H7N9 cases have been reported.

#### **What is H7N9?**

[H7N9](#) in humans was first reported in March 2013. Symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Infection with the new virus has resulted in severe respiratory illness and, in some cases, death. Chinese authorities are conducting animal and human health investigations to learn more about this situation. Available evidence suggests that most people have been infected with the virus after having contact with infected poultry or contaminated environments.

#### **What can travelers and Americans living in China do to protect themselves?**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent H7N9. CDC is repeating its standard advice to travelers and Americans living in China to follow good hand hygiene and food safety practices and to avoid contact with animals.



- **Do not touch birds, pigs, or other animals.**
  - Do not touch animals whether they are alive or dead.
  - Avoid live bird or poultry markets.
  - Avoid other markets or farms with animals (wet markets).
- **Eat food that is fully cooked.**
  - Eat meat and poultry that is fully cooked (not pink) and served hot.
  - Eat hard-cooked eggs (not runny).
  - **Don't** eat or drink dishes that include blood from any animal.
  - **Don't** eat food from street vendors.
- **Practice hygiene and cleanliness:**
  - Wash your hands often.
  - If soap and water aren't available, clean your hands with hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
  - Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. If you need to touch your face, make sure your hands are clean.
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
  - Try to avoid close contact, such as kissing, hugging, or sharing eating utensils or cups, with people who are sick.
- **See a doctor if you become sick during or after travel to China.**
  - See a doctor right away if you become sick with fever, coughing, or shortness of breath.
  - If you get sick while you are still in China, visit the [US Department of State website](#) to find a list of local doctors and hospitals. Many foreign hospitals and clinics are accredited by the Joint Commission International. A list of accredited facilities is available at their website ([www.jointcommissioninternational.org](http://www.jointcommissioninternational.org)).
  - According to a [message](#) issued by the [US Embassy in Beijing](#), patients with fever and other symptoms of flu will be sent to designated hospitals for evaluation.
  - Delay your travel home until after you have recovered or your doctor says it is okay to travel.
  - If you get sick with fever, coughing, or shortness of breath after you return to the United States, be sure to tell your doctor about your recent travel to China.

## **Clinician information:**

Clinicians should consider the possibility of avian influenza A (H7N9) virus infection in persons presenting with respiratory illness within 10 days of an appropriate travel or exposure history. Although the majority of H7N9 cases have resulted in severe respiratory illness in adults, infection with this virus may cause mild illness in some and may cause illness in children as well. Influenza diagnostic testing in patients with respiratory illness for whom an etiology has not been confirmed may identify human cases of avian influenza A virus infection or new cases of variant influenza in the United States. If patients are infected with H7N9 virus, reverse-transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) testing will be positive for influenza A but will be unsubtypeable. Clinicians suspecting H7N9 infection should obtain appropriate specimens and notify their local or state health department promptly. State health departments should notify CDC of suspected cases within 24 hours. For more information, see the [Health Alert Notice](#) issued April 5, 2013.

Because of the potential severity of illness associated with H7N9 virus infection, it is recommended that all confirmed and probable H7N9 case-patients and H7N9 case-patients under investigation receive antiviral treatment with a neuraminidase inhibitor as early as possible. Treatment should be initiated even if it is more than 48 hours after onset of illness. Laboratory testing and initiation of antiviral treatment should occur simultaneously. For more information, see CDC's [interim recommendations](#) on the use of antivirals in treating H7N9 influenza.

### **Additional Information:**

- [Avian Influenza A \(H7N9\) Virus \(CDC\)](#)
- [Human infection with influenza A \(H7N9\) in China \(WHO\)](#) 
- [Frequently Asked Questions on human infection with influenza A \(H7N9\) virus, China](#)  (WHO).

### **END TRAVEL NOTICE**

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in China enroll in the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at <https://step.state.gov/step>. STEP enrollment gives you the latest security updates, and makes it easier for the U.S. Embassy or nearest U.S. Consulate to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have Internet access, enroll directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Regularly monitor the State Department's website at <http://travel.state.gov>, where you can find current Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and the Worldwide Caution. Read the Country Specific Information for China at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1089.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1089.html). For additional information, refer to "A Safe Trip Abroad" on the State Department's website.

Contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate for up-to-date information on travel restrictions. You can also call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free from within the United States and Canada, or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Follow us on Twitter at <https://mobile.twitter.com/travelgov> and Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/travelgov>, and download our free Smart Traveler iPhone App at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/smart-traveler/id442693988?mt=8> to have travel information at your fingertips.

The American Citizen Services unit of the U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai is located at 1038 West Nanjing Road, 8th Floor, Shanghai 200041. For the American Citizen Services operation hours, please refer to our website: <http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/service.html>. If you are a U.S. citizen in need of urgent assistance, the emergency number for the U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai is (86) (21) 3217-4650.